

Remarks

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

In the last Office Action, the examiner stated that claims 8 and 10-15 would be allowable if written in independent form. Claims 8, 10, 14, and 15 have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 11-13 are dependent on claim 10. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 8 and 10-15 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the pusher which is mounted on each conveyor pushes a row of products along the associated product support from the entry portion of the product support toward the exit portion of the product support. That language clearly distinguishes Wierschke 6,332,527. Wierschke describes a plurality of product supports 37, a conveyor for each product support, and a pusher 40 on each conveyor for pushing a row of products along the product support, and a first motor (see marked-up Figure 16 attached to the first Office Action) for driving all of the conveyors and pushers simultaneously so that all rows of products are advanced at the same time. However, Wierschke does not describe two sets of conveyors and associated pushers for pushing products from the entry portion of the product support toward the exit portion of the product support and first and second motors for driving the two sets of conveyors independently.

The examiner's marked-up Figure 16 of Wierschke labels motor 104 as the "second motor" which drives the pushers 55. The examiner's marked-up Figure 24

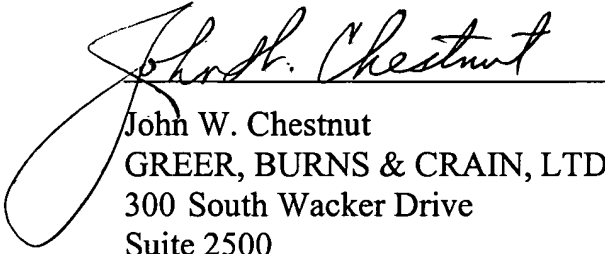
of Wierschke labels the leading shuttle 45 as the “second conveyor with pushers 55 associated with supports 37.” Applicant’s previous amendment explained why the leading shuttles 45 and the grippers 55 are “not conveyors” and “pushers”. However, even if the leading shuttle 45 is considered a conveyor and even if the pushers 55 are considered pushers, each pusher 55 does not push a row of products from the entry portion of the product support toward the exit portion of the product support as described in claim 1 (currently amended). Figures 2 and 9 of Wierschke illustrate the lead shuttle 45 in its maximum upstream position (col. 3, lines 35-38). In that position the leading shuttle is near the downstream end of the product supports 37. The upstream or entry portion of the product supports is to the right of Figures 2 and 9, and the upstream pulley for the conveyor 31 is not even shown in those Figures (col. 1, lines 29-30). As can be seen from Figures 24-26 of Wierschke and as explained in col. 3, line 44 to col. 4, line 19, the leading shuttle 45 travels toward the left with cut products of the log 53 and moves downstream from the exit portion of the product supports 37.

Even if the examiner remains of the opinion that claim 1 (currently amended) is not allowable, entry of the foregoing Amendment is respectfully requested in order to clarify the claims and to place the application in better condition for appeal.

Applicants submit herewith a check in the amount of \$400.00. If any additional amount is required, please charge the cost thereof to account 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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